

Lectio Divina – It is wonderful for us to be here



Transfiguration icon by Theophanes the Greek, 15th century

Lectio Divina – Listening to God’s Word with our hearts

“And the word was made flesh and dwelt amongst us”

In Imaginative Contemplation we pray with the Scriptures, allowing Christ in the Scriptures to speak to us through our imagination. In Lectio Divina we pray with the Scriptures by dwelling on God’s word by listening with our heart. In Imaginative Contemplation, Jesus’ words, actions, teaching and relationships with people become familiar to us when we enter into the Scripture passage using our imagination. In Lectio Divina, God’s word becomes familiar to us by listening with our hearts and dwelling on His words. Listening with our hearts is something we do automatically in everyday life when we for example dwell on the beauty of nature or listening to someone we love or recall a poignant memory.

Lectio Divina or divine reading has four parts: reading, repeating, responding and resting.

Reading: Begin by reading the Scripture Passage slowly until a word or a phrase resonates with you. Then stop for the moment.

Repeating: Dwell on the words you have chosen. Repeat them again and again as though God is saying them to you. Try not to analyse them, just let them speak to you. Savour the words.

Responding: Allow God's heart to speak to your heart. He wants to be close to you so ask yourself what this invitation could mean. Speak to God with your heart. Be open to what he is trying to reveal to you. Share with God whatever is coming into your heart and mind.

Resting: Rest in the embrace and love of God. It is God's response to us. Your whole being is focussed on God so dwell in the moment. When you feel ready, move on.

As you listen to the following passage, note which parts move you but don't analyse anything. Then when you are ready, **read, repeat, respond** and **rest** and when you have dwelt on the words that initially resonated with you, continue on reading the passage and repeat the process.

Prayer

We acknowledge we are in the presence of God so let us say:

Direct O Lord and guide and influence all that is happening in my mind and heart during this time of prayer: all my moods and feelings, my memories and imaginings; my hopes and desires; may all be directed and influenced to your greater glory, praise and service and to my growth in your Spirit.
Amen

Let the Spirit enter our hearts and enlighten our minds as we listen to and reflect on the Transfiguration of Jesus. Grant us the love, wisdom and compassion that we may know and accept ourselves as beloved children of God and disciples of Christ.

Reading Mark 9:2-10

Six days later, Jesus took with him Peter and James and John and led them up a high mountain where they could be alone by themselves. There in their presence he was transfigured: his clothes became dazzlingly white, whiter than any earthly bleacher could make them. Elijah appeared to them with Moses; and they were talking with Jesus.

Then Peter spoke to Jesus: 'Rabbi,' he said 'it is wonderful for us to be here; so let us make three tents, one for you, one for Moses and one for Elijah'. He did not know what to say; they were so frightened. And a cloud

came, covering them in shadow; and there came a voice from the cloud, 'This is my Son, the Beloved. Listen to him.' Then suddenly, when they looked round, they saw no one with them any more but only Jesus.

As they came down from the mountain he warned them to tell no one what they had seen, until after the Son of Man had risen from the dead. They observed the warning faithfully, though among themselves they discussed what 'rising from the dead' could mean.

Questions for Reflection

As you slowly read this Gospel passage allow the Transfiguration of Jesus soak into your mind. Allow your focus to rest on Jesus alone, he is inviting you to stand alongside him and be not afraid. You may want to light a candle to help you ponder the passage or the icon at the top of the page.

1. What is this passage saying to you?
2. What word(s), sentence or phrase in this Gospel passage most caught your attention; most touched your heart; most challenged you; most comforted you? Is there anything in this passage that you found uncomfortable?
3. Jesus took with him three disciples on his journey up the mountain to be alone. Where do you go to be alone? Who are you journeying with during this Lenten season? Have you asked anyone to make this journey with you?
4. Jesus was transfigured in the presence of his three companions. When has your faith and trust in Jesus given you a time of transfiguration and awe? How do these experiences give you strength in times of trouble?
5. The disciples were afraid. Have there been times when you were afraid to follow God's will? When has fear kept you from sharing what you believe? "
6. "This is my beloved Son. Listen to him" God speaks the same words to you as His son or His daughter. When have you felt most loved by God? Do you struggle to see yourself as His beloved son or daughter?

Pope Francis tells us:

This event of the Transfiguration thus allowed the disciples to confront Jesus' Passion in a positive way, without being overwhelmed. They saw him as he would be after the Passion: glorious. And in this way Jesus prepared them for the trial. The Transfiguration helps the disciples, and us too, to understand that the Passion of Christ is a mystery of suffering, but it is above all a gift of love, of infinite love on Jesus' part.

Let us now spend 10 minutes reading, repeating, responding and resting and then share what we thought, felt etc. only if you are comfortable to do so.

End Prayer Suscipe of St. Ignatius of Loyola

Take, Lord, and receive all my liberty,
my memory, my understanding,
and my entire will,
All I have and call my own.
You have given all to me.
To you, Lord, I return it.
Everything is yours; do with it what you will.
Give me only your love and your grace,
that is enough for me.

Scripture texts: from the Jerusalem Bible 1966 by Dartington Longman & Todd Ltd and Doubleday and Company Ltd